
U.S. Department of the Interior • U.S. Geological Survey

MINERAL INDUSTRY SURVEYS

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SULFUR IN JANUARY 1997

During the month, production of combined Frasch and recovered elemental sulfur was 874,000 metric tons, according to the U.S. Geological Survey. January production was 3% lower than that of December 1996, and slightly lower than that of January 1996. Shipments of these combined products were 8% lower than those of December 1996.

Import and export data for January 1997 were not available at the time of publication. Import/export data and apparent consumption for January 1997 will be published in the February 1997 Sulfur Mineral Industry Surveys. Imports of recovered sulfur for December 1996 were 121,000 tons. Exports of

sulfur, for the same period, were 16,000 tons. Imports of sulfuric acid for December 1996 were 167,000 tons; exports were 9,000 tons.

Official trade data issued by U.S. Bureau of the Census indicated imports of elemental sulfur for the last few months are significantly higher than any time in the past. The listed sources for the material are not normally countries that export sulfur to the United States; the data are being verified. Until the inquiry is complete, U.S. import data for elemental sulfur will be adjusted to USGS to correspond to historic trends.

TABLE 1
SALIENT SULFUR STATISTICS 1/

(Thousand metric tons)

Period	Production				Shipments, all sources
	Frasch 2/	Petroleum 3/	Natural gas	Total	
1995:	759	5,020	4,580	10,400	10,700
1996:					
January	W	433	449 4/	882	884
February	W	406	419 4/	825	815
March	W	430	424 4/	854	835
April	W	449	423 4/	872	898
May	W	467	422 4/	889	863
June	W	416	397 4/	813	763
July	W	433	427 4/	860	832
August	W	468	432 4/	900	917
September	W	440	401 4/	841	872
October	W	466	412 4/	878	885
November	W	481	354 4/	835	858
December	W	484	413 4/	897	949
Total 4/	W	5,370	4,970	10,300	10,400
1997:					
January	W	447 p/	427 p/	874 p/	877 p/

p/ Preliminary. W Withheld to avoid disclosing company proprietary data; included with "Natural gas."

1/ Data are rounded to three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

2/ Estimates based on information available from the Texas Comptroller of Public Account and company quarterly reports.

3/ Includes a small quantity from coking operations.

4/ Includes data from Frasch producers.

TABLE 2
U.S. IMPORTS OF SULFUR 1/

(Thousand metric tons and thousand dollars)

Period	Canada		Mexico		Total, all countries 2/	
	Quantity	Value 3/	Quantity	Value 3/	Quantity	Value 3/
1995	1,670	65,000	502	28,900	2,200	99,700
December	116	4,020	40	1,800	174	6,870
1996:						
January	93 r/	4,460 r/	18	781	131 r/	6,200 r/
February	92 r/	3,840 r/	37	1,910	146 r/	6,390 r/
March	90 r/	2,220 r/	37	1,720	127 r/	3,930 r/
April	79 r/	1,990 r/	37	1,990	115 r/	3,980 r/
May	117 r/	2,230 r/	37	1,280	181 r/	4,470 r/
June	83 r/	1,320 r/	36	1,760	119 r/	3,080 r/
July	109 r/	4,470 r/	36	1,680	146 r/	6,150 r/
August	78 r/	1,390 r/	57	2,510	154 r/	4,410 r/
September	56 r/	1,090 r/	58	2,470	132 r/	3,940 r/
October	90 r/	1,890 r/	19 e/	826	109 r/ e/	2,710 r/
November	79 r/	1,510 r/	40	1,750	136 r/ e/	4,350 r/
December	64	1,170	57	2,510	121	3,690
Total	1,030	27,600	467	21,200	1,620	53,300

e/ Estimated. r/ Revised.

1/ Data are rounded to three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

2/ May include other countries not listed.

3/ Declared customs valuation.

TABLE 3
U.S. IMPORTS OF SULFURIC ACID 1/

(Thousand metric tons and thousand dollars)

Period	Canada			Europe			Total 2/		
	Quantity	Sulfur content	Value 3/	Quantity	Sulfur content	Value 3/	Quantity	Sulfur content	Value 3/
1995	1,660	544	61,500	95	30	710	1,900	619	66,500
December	133	44	4,260	--	--	--	139	45	5,280
1996:									
January	112	37	3,420	9	3	113	144	47	4,120
February	110	36	2,700	11	4	232	188	62	3,550
March	144	47	3,900	35	12	466	199	65	4,510
April	126	41	3,620	40	13	421	202	66	4,350
May	147	48	3,990	20	7	223	192	63	4,510
June	113	37	2,670	21	7	160	140	46	3,460
July	106	35	2,770	21	7	86	132	43	3,210
August	127	41	3,260	11	3	176	138	45	3,620
September	156	51	3,760	19	6	70	195	64	4,160
October	144	47	3,690	--	--	--	161	53	3,890
November	166	54	3,900	10	3	79	223	73	4,330
December	146	48	3,360	13	4	496	167	55	4,860
Total	1,600	522	41,000	210	69	2,520	2,080	682	48,500

1/ Data are rounded to three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

2/ May include other countries not listed.

3/ Declared customs valuation.

Source: Bureau of the Census.

TABLE 4
U.S. EXPORTS OF SULFUR AND SULFURIC ACID 1/

(Thousand metric tons and thousand dollars)

Period	Sulfur		Sulfuric Acid		
	Quantity	Value 2/	Quantity	Sulfur content	Value
1995	905	66,200	171	56	12,800
December	99	5,340	6	2	774
1996:					
January	102	7,600	13	4	1,370
February	82	7,080	6	2	805
March	66	1,590	10	3	900
April	120	6,720	7	2	938
May	15	2,330	9	3	1,080
June	124	4,990	8	3	785
July	62	3,160	9	3	978
August	139	7,280	12	4	1,090
September	36	1,910	12	4	1,080
October	92	3,760	12	4	1,440
November	59	3,510	10	3	869
December	16	1,810	9	3	1,020
Total	913	51,700	117	38	12,300

1/ Data are rounded to three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

2/ Declared f.a.s. (free alongside ship) valuation.

Source: Bureau of the Census.

TABLE 5
U.S. CONSUMPTION OF SULFUR 1/

(Thousand metric tons)

Period	Domestic sources 2/	Imports	Consumption
1995	9,830	2,200	12,000
December	818	174	992
1996:			
January	780	131 r/	911 r/
February	733	146 r/	879 r/
March	769	127 r/	896 r/
April	778	115 r/	893 r/
May	848	181 r/	1,030 r/
June	639	119 r/	758 r/
July	770	146 r/	916 r/
August	778	154 r/	932 r/
September	836	132 r/	968 r/
October	793	109 r/ e/	902 r/
November	799	136 r/ e/	935 r/
December	933	121	1,050
Total	9,460	1,620	11,100

e/ Estimated. r/ Revised.

1/ Data are rounded to three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

2/ Calculated as shipments minus exports.

TABLE 6
RECOVERED SULFUR PRODUCED AND SHIPPED IN THE UNITED STATES,
BY PAD (PETROLEUM ADMINISTRATION FOR DEFENSE) DISTRICT 1/

(Thousand metric tons)

District and source	January 1997 p/		December 1996		Total 1996 2/	
	Production	Shipments	Production	Shipments	Production	Shipments
PAD 1:						
Petroleum and coke	9	8	21	21	217	225
Natural gas	15	16	4	4	51	51
Total	24	25	25	25	267	276
PAD 2:						
Petroleum and coke	88	91	89	89	927	925
Natural gas	1	2	4	4	50	49
Total	89	92	93	93	977	975
PAD 3: 3/						
Petroleum and coke	269	285	289	285	3,140	3,110
Natural gas 4/	321	306	312	366	3,860	3,920
Total	590	591 5/	601	651 5/	7,000	7,030 5/
PAD 4 and 5: 6/						
Petroleum and coke	81	84	85	89	1,090	1,100
Natural gas	90	85	94	90	1,010	992
California	60	63	66	69	828	834
Total	171	169	179	179	2,100	2,090
Grand total	874	877	897	949	10,300	10,400

p/ Preliminary.

1/ Data are rounded to three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

2/ May include revisions to prior months.

3/ Includes Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

4/ Frasch production is included in the natural gas production to avoid disclosing company proprietary data.

5/ Includes data from Frasch producers.

6/ Quantities produced and shipped in California included in petroleum and natural gas. California total shown for information purposes only.

TABLE 7
COMPARATIVE SULFUR AND SULFURIC ACID STATISTICS 1/

(Million metric tons per year [annualized basis] and dollars per metric ton for period shown)

	1997	1996		
	January	December	November	Total
Production	10.30 p/	10.60	10.20	10.30
Shipments	10.30 p/	11.20	10.50	10.40
Exports of sulfur	NA	0.18	0.72	0.91
Imports of sulfur:				
Canada	NA	0.75	0.93	1.03
Mexico	NA	0.66	0.49	0.47
Total	NA	1.42	1.66	1.62
Exports of H ₂ SO ₄	NA	0.10	0.12	0.12
Imports of H ₂ SO ₄ :				
Canada	NA	1.72	2.03	1.59
Europe	NA	0.15	0.12	0.21
Total 2/	NA	1.97	2.72	2.07
Consumption: 3/				
Domestic sources	NA	11.00	9.75	9.46
Imports	NA	1.42	1.65	1.62
Total	NA	12.40	11.40	11.10
Sulfur export values 4/	NA	\$113	\$59	\$57
Sulfur import values: 4/				
Canada	NA	\$18	\$19 r/	\$27
Mexico	NA	\$44	\$44	\$45
Average	NA	\$30	\$32 r/	\$33
H ₂ SO ₄ export values 4/	NA	\$113	\$87	\$106
H ₂ SO ₄ import values: 4/				
Canada	NA	\$23	\$24	\$26
Europe	NA	\$38	\$8	\$12
Average	NA	\$29	\$19	\$23

p/ Preliminary. r/ Revised. NA Not available.

1/ Data are rounded to three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

2/ Includes other countries not listed.

3/ Because trade data was not available, January consumption was not determined.

4/ Average value per ton for most recent data available.